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SOURCE La Vigie Marocaine

FAILURE OF SOCIALIZED AGRICULTURE IN THE SATELLITES

[Comment: Following is a summary of an article by A. Rigaud,
 of CERER (unidentified), which emphasizes the failure of the agri-
 cultural socialization program in the Satellites and gives the
 reasons for its failure. The article appeared in two parts in the
 10 and 17 September 1953 issues of La Vigie Marocaine, pro-West
 conservative newspaper. The source is considered to be the most
 influential and reliable newspaper in French Morocco.]

Land Holdings Prior to Communist Regimes

Before the Communists came to power in the Satellites, the vast majority
 of the people in these countries were engaged in agricultural pursuits, as
 follows: 80 percent in Bulgaria, 78 percent in Rumania, 65 percent in Poland,
 53 percent in Hungary, and 38 percent in Czechoslovakia.

Generally speaking, large land estates in these countries were an excep-
 tion. In Bulgaria, in 1946, very few land holdings exceeded 30 hectares in
 area and only one percent of the arable land was leased for cultivation.
 Actually, 63 percent of the farms had less than 5 hectares each, and accounted
 for 30 percent of the total area; 25.2 percent of the farms had between 5 and
 10 hectares each, and accounted for 36.9 percent of the total area; 10.3 per-
 cent of the farms had between 10 and 30 hectares each, and accounted for 29.5
 percent of the total area; .3 percent of the farms had between 30 and 50 hec-
 tares each, and accounted for 2 percent of the total area; .1 percent of the
 farms had more than 50 hectares each, and accounted for 1.6 percent of the
 total area.

In Rumania, in 1945, a new law fixed the maximum size of land holdings
 at 50 hectares.

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In Hungary, in March 1945, 3,248,000 hectares of land (34 percent of the country's total area) were distributed among 730,000 agricultural workers and landless peasants. The maximum size of individual land holdings was fixed by law at 100 hectares.

In Poland, meanwhile, farms with more than 50 hectares each came to a total of 4,600,000 hectares (18 percent of the country's total arable area).

Since 1919, all land holdings in Czechoslovakia of more than 100 hectares have been divided among the peasants.

Reasons for Collectivization Seen as Political and Military

Farm collectivization in these agriculturally backward countries could not fail to result in a decrease in production. Contrary to the claims of Communist propaganda, forced collectivization is not a means of increasing agricultural production. It is, instead, a political move designed to change the outlook of the people, militarize the nation, and control the agricultural manpower resources in order to supply cheap labor for industry and, particularly, armaments production.

If the new masters of these countries had really wished to promote the general well-being and economic progress of their people, they could have encouraged agriculture and given aid to the peasants. However, such a course of action would not have been very wise from the standpoint of their doctrine, for this would have meant creating a political and social class obstinately attached to the principle of private property ownership. Under such circumstances, the peasants would have demanded goods in exchange for their products, goods that industry would have been unable to supply to them. Dissatisfied as a result of not being able to obtain needed consumer goods, the peasants then would have neglected their fields, reduced the area under cultivation, and consequently reduced the amount of produce likely to be requisitioned. All these difficulties are virtually eliminated when millions of peasants are grouped in a few tens of thousands of large farms.

By collectivizing lands, buildings, and livestock, the Communists have obtained a threefold result:

1. They eliminated the property-owning farmers as a class and incorporated them into the proletariat, while compelling the peasants, who had been previously independent, to work as wage-earning farm laborers.
2. They socialized all rural areas and thus were able to obtain the entire farm output, except a small amount allocated to the farmers on the basis of their contribution to the collective farms in terms of days of work.
3. They completely militarized the peasants and integrated them into a vast system patterned after the national military organization, from squad (labo. brigade) to general staff (located in the capital).

In the event of war, each collective farm would become a veritable supply depot.

Resistance to Collectivization

While collectivization has been more completely achieved in the USSR, the Satellites are encountering stubborn resistance on the part of the peasants. As a result, although the Communists have made considerable progress in this field, the majority of the peasants in the Satellites are not yet organized in kolkhozes.

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In Bulgaria, about half of the total land area has been socialized; as a result, there are 3,000 cooperative labor farms (TKZS) with a total of 2,100,000 hectares (of the country's total of 4,671,336) and employing 628,000 peasants.

According to a speech made by the Rumanian Minister of Agriculture, Prisnea, on 26 May 1953, there are 4,000 socialized agricultural enterprises in Rumania totaling 270,000 families. These families constitute 44 percent of the so-called peasant middle class.

In 1952, the most recent date for which data is available, Poland had 3,362 kolkhozes, comprising 71,800 small farms out of the country's total of 3,249,124 farms. The total area of socialized farms amounts to 500,000 hectares, i.e., only 3 percent of the total arable area, which amounts to 15,500,000 hectares.

In Hungary, according to data divulged in December 1952 by Premier Rakosi, the so-called socialized sector of agriculture has 37.3 percent of the total arable area. State farms or enterprises figure in this percentage in the amount of 12.7 percent; they have a total of 678,300 hectares. Producers' cooperatives have 1,261,410 hectares (22.8 percent of the total arable land in Hungary); in addition, their workers exploit 97,960 hectares (1.8 percent of the total) for themselves.

In Czechoslovakia, the limited success achieved by collectivization has not induced the Communists to publish any data. The only known information was published by Slansky in the 4 and 11 January 1951 issues of the Czech weekly periodical *Tvorba*. According to Slansky's article, at that time Czechoslovakia had 468 [farm] cooperatives, of which 154 were true kolkhozes. The entire socialized sector of agriculture had one million hectares.

Drawbacks of Collective System Cited

The press of the Satellites does not conceal the shortcomings of the collectivization system; the principal ones are as follows:

1. Incompetence of the [collective farm] directors, who lack authority and are not familiar with farm work.
2. Too large an administrative staff at each collective farm, which has a chairman, directors general, deputy directors, accountants, secretary-stenographers, agronomists, veterinarians, comptrollers, inspectors, political propagandists, agrotechnical instructors, [Communist] Party secretaries and delegates.
3. Laziness of the peasants. According to the Hungarian newspaper *Szabab Nep*, the peasants are unable, even after one or 2 years of collective farm experience, to rid themselves of traditional ideas, habits, and prejudices. Moreover, the peasant women, who formerly did a considerable amount of work in the fields, now refuse to do similar work for the kolkhozes.
4. Lack of individual initiative. All operations are carried out strictly on orders from the Central Committee. If the orders are not received, sowing, haymaking, and even harvesting are neglected.
5. Poorly organized work. Everyone concerns himself with everything, but no one wants to take any responsibility.

Food Rationing, the Result of Unwise Farm Policy

The results of this farm policy are easily discernible in the food supply situation of the various Satellite countries. Even Hungary, formerly one of the granaries of Europe, is now in the throes of a real food shortage. The

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bread available on the market is dark, coarse, gummy, and full of bran. According to Hungarian refugees who arrived in Vienna recently, whenever a cartload of potatoes or cabbage appears in any of the districts of Budapest, the news spreads with great rapidity and hundreds of women rush to the vehicle.

In Czechoslovakia, the ration cards issued in May 1953 for a period of 3 months did not include butter or milk quotas for adults. Moreover, the /milk? ration for children between 6 and 12 was reduced to 220 grams /daily?, and that for adolescents between 12 and 18 was reduced to 150 grams. The present /per capita? sugar ration amounts to 600 grams per month. Peasants who fail to deliver their fixed produce quotas, or fail to fulfill the production plan, are not entitled to receive ration cards.

In Rumania, the workers are entitled to only 300 grams of bread daily and 300 grams of meat weekly. Certain commodities, such as sugar, have not been available since January 1953. Butter, edible oil, and fats are rarely available. The peasants in the Bucharest area sell or exchange eggs, milk, and fowl on the so-called barter market, in order to secure some bread. This seems to indicate that the authorities have allocated to them an insufficient amount of wheat or flour. Since the last corn crop was below expectations, the peasants were required to make up their corn quotas with wheat. On the other hand, it does not appear that the people can offset the bread shortage with other foodstuffs. Fish has not been available for a long time. The press justly complains daily of the lack of vegetables.

In Poland, no butter or eggs have been available since the end of February 1953, and in some areas even potatoes are unobtainable. Bread, made with a mixture of bran and chaff, was never of such poor quality, even at the time of the German occupation.

Nor is there any relief in sight for the people of the Satellite countries, who must suffer hunger for years to come. This probably explains the abrupt change which has occurred in Soviet foreign policy.

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